

whenever they are safely behind glass doors
or atop the back wall.
consequently the dog hates them and,
whenever she slips into the house
or is allowed into the front yard,
you can be sure she sends them scurrying
like a siamese fire drill.

the fourth cat is old
and never runs from the dog
so the dog doesn't chase her.
they act, in fact, as if they would
really like to be friends.
they often sleep almost huddled together,
separated only by the plate-glass windows
or sliding patio doors.
i have tried to let them get to know
each other in the same room also,
and such encounters always proceed
without hostility or violence
until the dog tries, instinctively,
to sniff the cat's ass. then the cat,
understandably indignant, flares up and
hisses and swipes with its claws.
the dog comes within a centimeter
of being blinded, and i have to
put her back outside.

i perceive a confucian dictum in all this:

it is best to keep one's snoot
out of the desired one's anus
during the initial stages of wooing.

COVER THY FLANKS

the new biography of einstein
alleges he was a womanizer
who "may have" beaten his wife
and who "deteriorated" into misogyny.

an awful lot of very intelligent
men seem to have "deteriorated"
into misogyny, if one is to
believe the feminist and male-
feminist revisionist biographies.

maybe what they call misogyny
is not so much a form of
deterioration as it is a mature
stage of experientially-acquired
wisdom.